

# Aboriginal Health Research News

## Message from Dr. Malcolm King, IAPH Scientific Director



In the previous newsletter, I wrote about attending a workshop in Tromsø, Norway. This month, I am writing to elaborate on some of the highlights from this workshop. This workshop brought together two teams, one led by Eduardo

Chachamovich from McGill University and the other by Susan Chatwood from the Institute for Circumpolar Health Research, both funded under the funding opportunity [The Evidence-Base for Promoting Mental Wellness and Resilience to Address Suicide in Circumpolar Communities](#). At this workshop, the researchers and their

community partners, representing eight different communities from across Arctic nations, shared their experiences and views on different suicide prevention programs and then agreed on approaches to move their respective projects forward, an essential step because the teams will be producing a single report, which will be used to inform the work of the Arctic Council.

Overall, I was particularly impressed with how naturally Indigenous ways of knowing were interwoven into the fabric of the workshop and the work of the research teams. Transforming Indigenous health through Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Two-Eyed-Seeing figures prominently in IAPH's vision for the future. As Eduardo and Susan are doing in these projects, I encourage all researchers working with Aboriginal communities to explore how you can

also incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing into your research. The Tromsø workshop also highlighted how easily the research teams are willing to collaborate with each other. As is often the case when we explore new approaches and collaboration, we often walk away with a new perspective and most likely new directions for research. Collaborating with communities and working across research teams exemplifies what CIHR is aiming to achieve in Pathways and many of the [other Signature Initiatives](#). In March 2015, CIHR and partners will be hosting a symposium in Iqaluit where we will hear about the results of this research. I will be sure to share with you the highlights of this workshop; until then I wish all the participants best of luck with their projects.

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## In Memoriam: Dr. Eric Dewailly



It is with great sadness that I learned of the sudden and unexpected passing away of Dr. Eric Dewailly in June. Dr. Dewailly was a professor of medicine at Laval University and director of the Laval University Medical Centre's Public Health Research Unit. A medical doctor and specialist in human toxicology, Dr. Dewailly was internationally recognized for his research on the endocrine-disrupting effects of environmental toxins in the seafood that makes up the traditional

Inuit diet. He was the scientific director of the WHO Collaborative Center in Environmental Health. Some of you will probably remember Eric for his leadership at the Nasivvik Centre for Inuit Health and Changing

Environments and on the inaugural Institute Advisory Board of the IAPH. He was an outstanding researcher, a leader in his field, and a huge supporter of Aboriginal health research. Dr. Dewailly will be greatly missed by all, and I wish to share my heartfelt sympathies to his loved ones, colleagues and friends.



Photo credit: ArcticNet



# Pathways Update

## *Partners for Engagement and Knowledge Exchange (PEKEs) Inaugural Meeting*

In the context of the Pathways to Health Equity for Aboriginal Peoples (Pathways) Signature Initiative, a milestone has been reached with the selection, funding and inaugural meeting of the Partners for Engagement and Knowledge Exchange (PEKEs). Congratulations to the successful applicants to the PEKEs:

- the First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba (FNHSSM);
- the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC); and
- the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC).

Funding of the PEKEs was officially announced earlier this month through a Government of Canada News Release.

The PEKEs are a critical component of the suite of Pathways funding opportunities. The overall goal of the PEKEs is to facilitate learning across funded research teams and the research Chairs, and help them to scale-up interventions across communities and translating the findings into policies and decision-making. The PEKEs will help engage First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, communities and organizations and will strengthen Pathways' impact while helping to ensure that Aboriginal voices, Ways of Knowing, and culture all feed into the work being done. The PEKEs will play a central role in linking and facilitating interactions among the research teams and Chairs with Aboriginal communities, policy makers and partners.

The PEKEs held their inaugural meeting in Ottawa on June 24th along with the CIHR Institute leads and staff. At the meeting, participants identified key opportunities and challenges with the initiative and shared their suggestions for how we could work together. Discussions largely focused on three themes:

- Maximizing community engagement and involvement of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Aboriginal Peoples in Pathways;
- Identifying a slate of community relevant outcomes and indicators of success as well as "enhancing and strengthening" community research capacity; and
- Ensuring that Inuit and Métis, First Nations and Urban Aboriginal peoples

are all engaged and benefit from the activities being undertaken within the Pathways initiative.

## *What's next?*

The PEKEs will strengthen community engagement and involvement in Pathways by:

1. Assisting CIHR in preparing and presenting 2 webinars on best practices for community engagement: one for Implementation Research Team (IRT) applicants, and another for the Peer Review panel for the IRTs;
2. Reviewing the IRT funding opportunity and providing suggestions to CIHR on how to strengthen community engagement and involvement.

Another important activity of the PEKEs will revolve around the Annual Pathways meeting which will take place in March. This yearly meeting of Pathways-related researchers and their teams, the PEKEs and other stakeholders will be the principal means by which engagement will take place and will fuel cross learnings in implementation research, knowledge translation, community engagement etc. This meeting will also enable CIHR to measure progress and realign the initiative as needed.

Future steps from the PEKE meetings will include discussions on community outcomes and indicators of success and Knowledge Translation activities such as hosting a joint Café Scientifique on a Pathways-relevant topic.

## ABOUT PATHWAYS

Pathways is a CIHR signature initiative which commits \$25 million over 10 years to study the development, adaptation and scale-up of interventions that address four critical health inequities affecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis populations: Suicide Prevention, Tuberculosis, Diabetes/Obesity and Oral Health. Research and implementation conducted through the Pathways initiative will lead to:

- Increased understanding of how to implement programs that will reduce health inequities facing First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples;
- Improved health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples across the four priority areas;
- Better understanding of how to reduce health inequities and how this new knowledge can be adapted and applied to other communities; and
- Increased research capacity in the area of implementation science related to the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and other vulnerable populations.

A suite of funding opportunities have been or will be launched through the Pathways initiative: Applied Public Health Chairs, Population Health Intervention Research (PHIR) Grants, Implementation Research Teams Components I, II, and III. Pathways is also linked to International initiatives: Arctic Council, and the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (GACD).



Dr. Malcolm King with the members of the three PEKEs (left to right: Catherine Graham, NAFC; Claudette Dumont-Smith & Amy Nahwegahbow, NWAC; Leona Star & Elder Norman Bone, FNHSSM)



# New IAPH Staff member



**Cynthia Stirbys**  
**Assistant Director – Burnaby**

Cynthia Stirbys is Saulteaux-Cree from the Cowessess First Nation in Saskatchewan. She holds a Master of Arts degree in Conflict Studies from Saint Paul University, Ottawa, where much of her research was centered on the history of First Nations people, including determinants of health and governance. She is presently completing her PhD in Women's Studies at the University of Ottawa. Her current research examines the intergenerational effects of

the Indian residential school experience in the context of developing a decolonizing conceptual health framework. Ms. Stirbys has a strong understanding that only a (w)holistic approach to wellness and health can bring positive change within the undeniable interconnectedness of all 'life circles' on this planet. Her main interest is to work in areas that affect and improve Indigenous peoples' opportunities for prosperity and well-being.

## CIHR Funding Opportunities

### **Doctoral Research Award : Fall 2014 Priority Announcement**

#### **Application Deadline: 2014-10-01**

- [Aboriginal Research Methodologies](#)
- [Research in First Nations, Métis and/or Inuit Health](#)

### **Planning and Dissemination Grants**

#### **Application Deadline: 2014-08-18**

[Funding opportunity](#)

### **Travel Awards**

#### **Application Deadline: 2014-09-22**

[Funding opportunity](#)

## **Reminder: Pathways FOs**

### **Pathways Implementation Research Team – Component 1**

Letter of Intent deadline: 2014-08-05

Full Application: 2014-10-15

[Funding opportunity](#)

### **Operating Grant: Population Health Intervention Research**

Application Deadline: 2014-09-15

[Funding opportunity](#)

The Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health fosters the advancement of a national health research agenda to improve and promote the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada, through research, knowledge translation and capacity building. The Institute's pursuit of research excellence is enhanced by respect for community research priorities and Indigenous knowledge, values and cultures.

### **Catalyst Grant : Ethics (2014-2015)**

#### **Registration Deadline: 2014-08-15**

#### **Application Deadline: 2014-09-15**

The purpose of this [funding opportunity](#) is to build capacity in ethics as it applies to health (including health research, health promotion and maintenance, clinical care, population and public health, health systems and services, policy and governance) by encouraging applications from nominated principal applicants who are new investigators in the field of health ethics, or investigators new to the field of health ethics, by offering one or two-year pilot project grants.

### **New Investigator Salary Award : Winter 2014 Priority Announcement**

#### **Application Deadline: 2014-12-01**

- [Research in First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis Health](#)

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